

# **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific  
knowledge, policies, or practices



3 Hh  
HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Thursday, June 20, 1935

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "CAMPS FOR TIRED HOUSEWIVES." Information from the Extension Office, United States Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

In the good old days not so very long ago a summer vacation in the life of a farm housewife was about as rare as a black pearl. Not long ago you would have found plenty of women on farms in any State in the Union who hadn't had a day off for fifteen, twenty, even thirty years. City women might escape their household cares for refreshing summer days in the country, but the hardest working housewives of all just had double duty during summer days -- had extra jobs like cooking for threshers, canning food for winter, or preparing big Sunday dinners for visitors from the city.

No telling how many generations this situation might have lasted if it hadn't been for farm women's clubs. When these women joined forces in home demonstration clubs and community groups and so on, they naturally began discussing their own special needs. And naturally the vacation problem came up. Nobody knew better than they what all work and no play does to Jill as well as Jack. The question was how to arrange vacations for women with little time and less money to spend on them. One good answer was the farm women's recreation camp.

Nearly fifteen years ago home demonstration groups in several States first tried the idea of simple outdoor camps for a few days in summer. Somebody in the neighborhood offered a nice location; somebody else loaned tents and cots; the women themselves brought simple equipment for living and cooking; the extension specialists came to teach handicrafts or organize games and songs and plays or swimming classes. Many of the women who came to those camps had their first experience of a real vacation. The idea was a success. It spread to other States and this summer, according to all reports, more farm women will go vacationing this way than ever and many new camps will open.

In some fortunate communities women now have permanent camp sites and even clubhouses instead of the temporary camps that they started with. Women in Washington County, Arkansas, are very proud of their new permanent recreation camp. And no wonder. It stands on a bluff above the White River. The land has been deeded to the home demonstration clubs. And an attractive clubhouse waits there the year round to do its part in giving these farm housewives a summer vacation. The women themselves raised the money for the building materials for this clubhouse. They ran a market of their own and they did other odd jobs such as catering at the University Field Day. CWA workers provided the labor for the house which now has a large main room with a great rock fireplace at one end, a screened porch with shelves and tables for serving, a kitchen, a big basement,



even a bathroom. From this building a path and stone steps lead down the bluff to the river where campers have their choice of two swimming pools -- one deep and one shallow -- or boats, if they like to row.

Another kind of summer camp started in South Carolina last summer. Home demonstration clubs in three counties attended this three-day camp in Glenn Springs which they called the Leisure-Time Camp. Here the emphasis was on developing a hobby for spare time at home. All day long there were classes on all kinds of subjects that might interest the campers. The dramatic coach from the State University gave classes in play production; a beauty operator gave talks on good grooming; a clothing expert came in to discuss summer fashions; some groups studied knitting, others quilting, basketry, flower arrangement, soap making or labor saving devices. In the evenings they all joined in songs, games and plays. This camp only lasted three days but women who came from forty or fifty miles away are planning to return again this year.

Western states have many thriving women's camps. As you might imagine, western women are particularly enthusiastic campers. Last year Oregon had nine of these camps. In all of them the daily schedule included rest, recreation and classes for those who wanted to attend -- classes in handicrafts, dramatics, first aid, nature study and so on. One of the most popular of the handicrafts was home dyeing with native plants. The specialist from the state college showed the campers how to use wild berries, tree bark and roots to dye clothes, curtains, or other cloth. Oregon campers are great on games, too. You may find them playing anything from baseball to duck-on-the-rock. The camps in Oregon lasted from three to five days and the average cost to the women was \$1.75 apiece.

Wyoming had six recreation camps last year, the number of women attending ranging from seventy-two to twenty-five. One group of women used a disbanded CCC camp which was fitted up with a mess hall and tent foundations. The Forest Service loaned tents and gas lanterns and installed a telephone for them. The most popular handicraft in these Wyoming camps was leather work. Most of the campers came home with hand-made purses, bill folds, comb cases and so on.

Some of the largest and most thriving camps are in Idaho. Last year the women's camp in Southeastern Idaho enrolled 1497 campers; the northern district 255; and the northeastern section 537. Women came to camp in farm trucks with church benches to sit on. Some rode 100 miles this way to come to camp. The largest camp was pitched on public camp grounds. Some women brought their own tents; others rented cabins. Fishing and hiking were two of the most popular sports. The day's program included many discussions on the home of today and tomorrow -- talks about household buying, building, child care, and so on.

Well, there's a little picture of the kind of vacation many hundreds of farm homemakers are going to have this summer. For them it means a refreshing break in the long work season when their time is their own for resting, playing, learning, or making friends.

#####



